



Germany: Facts & Figures November 2007

A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany

Politics

If Bundestag elections were held December 2, the CDU/CSU would receive 39% of the vote, the SPD 26%, the Green Party 8%, the FDP 10%, the Left Party 12%, and all other parties combined 5%. (Forsa. 11/28/29/07)

54% of respondents are fed up with the bickering between the CDU and the SPD and favor new elections if both sides are unable to find a common denominator. 39% said the coalition should continue its work even if it can't find agreement on controversial questions. (Emnid. Bild am Sonntag, 11/05/07)

With respect to their job performance, 72% (down 5%) of respondents are satisfied with Chancellor Merkel's performance, 67% (unchanged) with Foreign Minister Steinmeier, 55% (down 4%) with Family Minister von der Leyen, 54% (down 5%) with Finance Minister Steinbrück, 53% (up 5%) with Labor Minister Müntefering, and 44% (up 3%) with SPD leader Kurt Beck's job performance. If Germans had the chance to directly elect the chancellor, 59% (down 7%) would vote for Merkel and 25% (up 6%) for Beck. (Deutschlandtrend. Die Welt, 11/02/07)

Economy

In November, the unemployment rate declined to 8.1% (October 8.2%). The number of unemployed dropped by 55,000 to 3.38 million. (Federal Employment Agency. 11/29/07)

The German economy grew by 0.7% in the third quarter, accelerating investment in construction and machinery. The growth was in line with the economists' expectations for Germany. (Major papers, 11/15/07)

Germany will not see a budget deficit this year for the first time since German reunification. The federal budget still has a deficit of 14 billion euros, but this is balanced by other state levels. Experts are expecting a deficit again for 2008. (Major papers, 11/15/07)

Germany exported arms goods worth 7.7 billion euros last year, up from 6.2 billion euros in 2005. Germany is now the third largest arms exporter in the world. (Sueddeutsche, 11/09/07)

The so-called Council of Five Wise Men predicts a slow-down in economic growth in 2008 in Germany. GDP growth will reach 1.9%, not the 2.2% leading economic institutes expect for Germany. Despite the decline in growth, the Five Wise Men expect a further decline of the unemployment rate and an increase in the number of gainfully employed people of more than 40 million. (Major papers, 11/07/07)

Society

A total of 504 persons died from the AIDS disease that is caused by HIV in Germany in 2006. Compared with 1996, that was a decrease by more than 68% in 2006. The number of deaths caused by AIDS is nearly stagnant over the last five years (2002: 518 deaths). (Federal Statistical Office. 11/28/07)

Also, the share of men among the number of deceased persons hardly changed; in 2006 (83%) it was much higher than that of women (17%). Although the share of men decreased between 1996 and 2001 by just under 9 percentage points to 76%, it increased again afterwards.

41% of Germans said good relations with France are particularly important. 25% named relations with the United States as important, 14% Russia, 10% China, and 5% Britain. 5% did not indicate a country. (TNS. Spiegel, 11/27/07)

The population in Germany decreased to 82.3 million in 2006. The number of immigrants dropped from 270,000 in 2001 to 23,000 in 2006. According to a study by the German Institute for Economic Research, Germany needs an immigration of 270,000 people per year to maintain its current population level. (Major papers. 11/23/07)

55% of Germans are optimistic about the future. While people in Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia are most optimistic, Saxons are at the bottom of the list. (Allianz. Major papers, 11/20/07)

76% of the people in France approve of Chancellor Merkel, and two-thirds of the people in Spain, Italy, and Germany also have a good opinion of her. In Britain, the support for Merkel reaches only 34% but only because many people are undecided. The situation is similar in the U.S. where Merkel meets with an approval rate of 30%, while 10% oppose her. The poll also revealed that President Bush's current approval rating in the U.S. is 36%, while 56% of Americans do not support him. But Bush is especially unpopular in France and Germany, where only 6% and 8% respectively support him. (Harris Interactive. Die Welt/FT Deutschland. 11/09/07)